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ABSTRACT

Schools are essentially human systems; without people they are nothing but wood, concrete, and paper. Yet, the people who make up schools -- professionals, parents, service personnel, and students -- often form into ineffective and poorly coordinated groups, much in the way that employees in the bureaucracies of industry and government become separated from one another. Rarely do the people in schools make a deliberate effort to examine their communication patterns or their organizational procedures. Organizational development (OD) offers a conceptualization and strategy for examining these activities. It enables the school to monitor and respond to the changing environment; and to find, maintain, and use the resources and ideas needed to respond. Through OD, a school can improve its self-renewing capabilities in improved communication and problemsolving processes, decisionmaking and meeting procedures, and the potential for collaboration. The school becomes self-renewing by experiencing learning-by-doing in the task group, skill training, new procedures, survey feedback, and group and intergroup exercises. In addition to describing organizational development, the publication outlines a sample organization development training sequence; and it lists individuals, programs, and references dealing with organization development in schools. (Artwork may reproduce poorly.) (Author/DN)

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building human systems in schools

# contents


| | Page |
|---|---|
| A View of Schools and the Process of Change | 5 |
| Organization Development Helps Schools Become Self-Renewing | 10 |
| The Organizational Functions of Self-Renewing Schools | 14 |
| The Capabilities of Self-Renewing Schools | 16 |
| The School Becomes Self-Renewing | 18 |
| Organization Development Can Be a Permanent Part of a Self-Renewing School District | 31 |
| Organization Development Makes a Difference | 37 |
| The Stages of and a Sample Training Sequence in OD | 38 |
| Individuals and Programs Concerned with Organization Development in Schools | 45 |
| Writings and References of Interest | 47 |

# introduction

Schools are essentially human systems; without people they are nothing but wood, concrete and paper. Educators—fully aware of this fact—are proud of their mission to improve the human condition. Yet, the people who make up schools—professionals, parents, service personnel, and students—often form into ineffective and poorly coordinated groups, much in the way that employees in the bureaucracies of industry and government become separated from one another.

Rarely do the people in schools make a deliberate effort to examine their communication patterns—who talks to whom about what and when; nor their group processes—the way people speak up in meetings to express concerns they may have about the way the group is working; nor their organizational procedures—how people are linked together to get work done. The few groups who have tried to bring the human resources together often have failed because they have lacked a well-organized conceptualization and a workable strategy for action.

Organization Development offers such a conceptualization and strategy. It includes a theory and technology for improving the people-with-people part of school life.

Organization Development is for groups or faculties that realize that the quality or result of an educational program depends on the quality of the people-with-people interaction that makes the program work. It is the human involvement and commitment in the interpersonal community—not the formal rules and procedures—that make a school run efficiently. Organization Development aims at helping people in schools develop increased interpersonal competence in carrying out their educational program together.

# a *view* of the schools and the process of change

In schools, people come together . . .
some to teach,
some to learn,
some to provide supporting services.

Schools are client-serving organizations created by the larger society of which they are a part. In general terms, schools provide technical and cultural instruction for people. They are also charged with maintaining continuity for society. But now and in the future they will be expected to identify and help achieve change that is needed.

To provide such services in a time when the culture is marked with pervasive and rapid change is difficult. While a basic sameness and stability remains in our culture, we are all aware of the complexity and turbulence of the society. Examples of change can be found in all our institutions. Many people and groups are questioning the basic structure of the family, church, and schools. The values of people are also changing. Increasing numbers of people are desiring a new consciousness, a new blend of individualism and responsibility to others. There is an urgency for remodeling—for reinstituting involvement and relevancy. The increasingly rapid growth of technology has led to a deeper awareness of its potential for cre-

ativity or for destruction. As the institutions, values, and technology of the society change, the behaviors of the people also change.

Schools have always been concerned with continuity and change in the culture. However, the emphasis has been on continuity and change has occurred as no more than a coping response. This emphasis on continuity and merely coping with external demands is no longer adequate. It assumes that change is followed by stability. Since change is continuous—change grows out of change—the emphasis should be on initiating rather than responding to change. This new conception of change demands that schools switch their focus and adopt new strategies. Schools need to become even more concerned with the problems related to change and become more capable of changing. They must respond effectively to higher and different expectations for education as the human condition changes and improves.

To focus on or become capable of change, it is necessary to focus on certain elements of change. What people should be involved? What are the goals of change? What is the most effective change process?

Certainly one of the major concerns is related to the people involved in change. Many groups of people—students, parents, professionals, and the many and various interest groups which make up our society—have a stake in the direction schools take and want to influence what goes on in schools. Bringing together people with different values, expectations, needs, and goals, and providing some means by which they can reach some basic understanding of each other, is a primary challenge to the schools.

Once the people have come together, it is important to identify common goals which are considered relevant to all. Determining relevance in today's world is difficult. Since human knowledge is expanding at a tremendous rate, it is a disservice to students to teach them only a given set of facts and perspectives. Students do need facts, just as they need the skills of reading, writing and math. But they need more: new ways of helping learners become self-directed, self-understanding, and able to relate interdependently with others must be found. Further, it is no longer possible to assume fixed family and work roles within the society. The learner needs preparation for changing roles or for creating new ones. In short, educational goals must be defined in terms of process rather than content.

Schools need to become humanized settings for human beings. They need to be places without failure—places where both learners and teachers can develop and reach their full potential for living in a changing world. This happens when teachers and students participate in the decisions that affect their lives and when opportunities for communication and warm interpersonal relationships with others and effective collaboration are provided.

Once the people come together to define and agree upon common process goals, the more difficult problem of making goals a reality becomes paramount. Many ideas in education hold promise for accomplishing the objectives we desire. Our attempts to translate these ideas from theory to definite practices, procedures and technologies, however, often meet with failure.

Too often the rhetoric of an innovation is adopted, but the people who must carry out the idea go on behaving in traditional ways. This is true of numerous attempts to change curriculum and teaching strategies. It is particularly true when the innovation calls for change in the organization and structure of the school, as when teaching roles are to be reshaped and traditional ways of working together transformed.

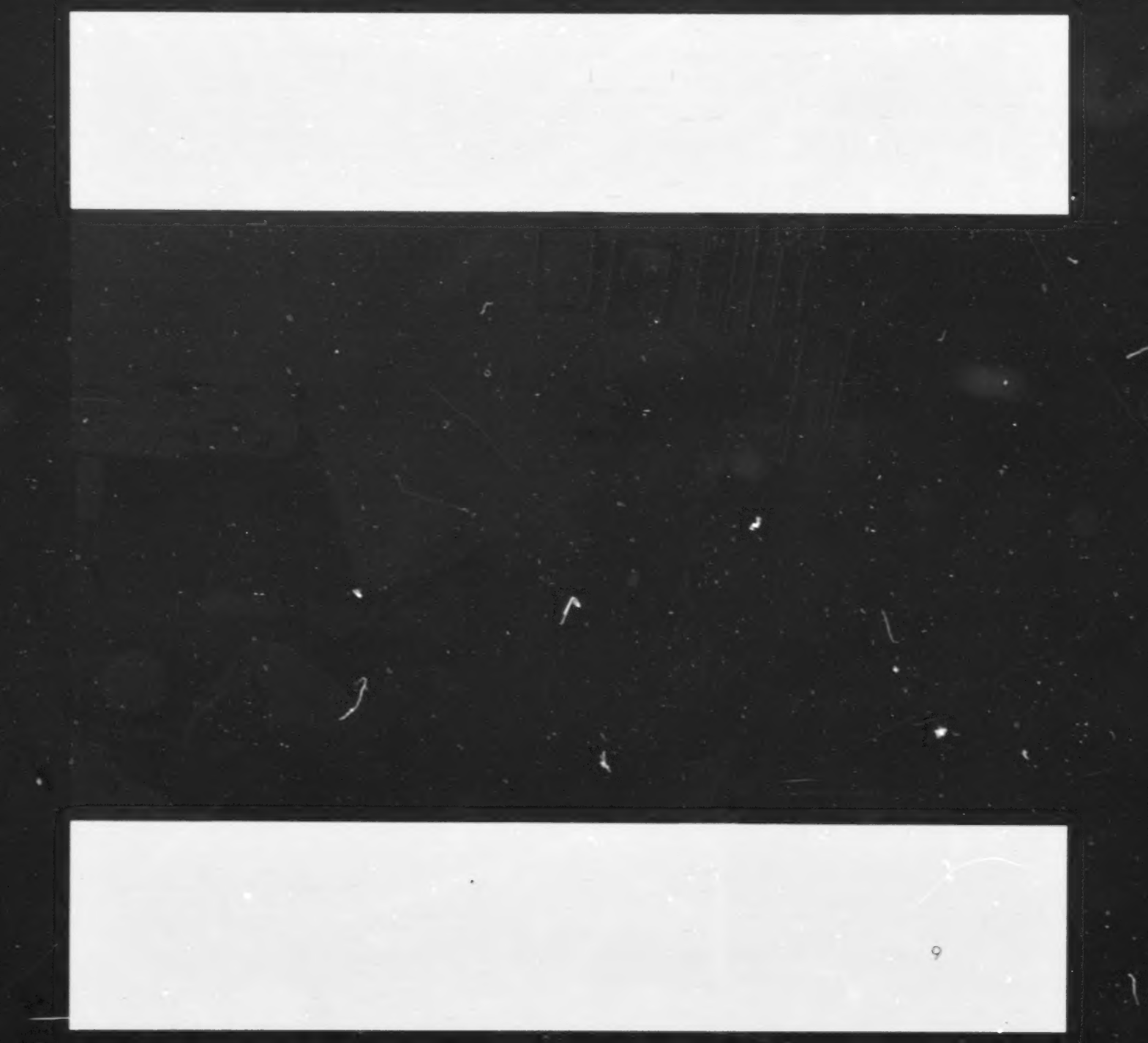
The problem does not seem to be a lack of good ideas and worthwhile innovations. Rather, the difficulty seems to lie in the process of change.

The process of change in schools has typically employed the use of outside experts who advocate some single and dramatic innovation. The results of using this strategy have often been disappointing. Outside consultants bring fresh ideas and advice, but when they are no longer there to advise and help, their recommendations are difficult to implement and those left behind lack commitment and a feeling that the new way is really their own.

A second feature of the typical change strategy is its focus on changing individuals. This approach assumes that individuals are the major source of the problems in schools and that they can be a major source of solutions. As a result of this assumption, schools often send individuals to workshops, college courses and training programs. Ample evidence suggests that the strategy of improving the skills of individuals will fail more often than not unless special attention is given to the way the resources are combined to make the total effect greater than the sum of individual efforts. We need to learn how to integrate each person's skill into the group effort. While we would all have trouble imagining a good athletic team or

symphony orchestra that did not spend time practicing together, the idea that groups that work together need to learn and practice together has not been widely used in education.

In summary, continuous change is required because of the variety and complexity of the society and of the people in schools. Typical strategies and processes are not adequate to help the people in schools come together to respond creatively in this situation. There is a definite need for a new and different way to think about schools and the process of change.



# organization development helps schools become self-renewing

Organization Development is a conceptual framework and a strategy to help schools meet the challenges of a changing and pluralistic society. It encompasses a theory and a technology to help schools become self-renewing and self-correcting systems of people—receptive to clues that change is required and able to respond with innovative and integrated programs and arrangements.

Organization Development helps schools as they attempt to increase the amount of understanding, commitment and involvement of professionals, parents, students, and citizens.

Organization Development Specialists desire to help people in schools

**learn** productive ways of working on the problems they encounter,

**improve** their organizational capabilities so that new ways of interacting can be initiated despite frustrations, and

**become confident** in their ability to understand themselves, assess their circumstances, identify their goals and perform the functions to which they commit themselves.

The Organization Development strategy outlined in this booklet rests on some basic assumptions about the sources of

difficulty, overcoming these problems, and about the process of change.

The strategy assumes that many of the difficulties and problems which face changing schools arise from the nature of the group or organization in which the change occurs. The dynamics of the group, not the skills of individuals in it, are seen as a major source of problems and as a primary determiner of the quality of solutions. These processes and procedures of the group can prevent the full use of human potential, but can, if coordinated smoothly, allow the release of the latent energy needed to be responsive and creative. The group itself can learn to examine and improve its own resources and patterns of interaction. The group can learn to look at and do something about its communication patterns, problem solving and decision-making processes, and the procedures by which people come together to create and maintain innovative programs in the school.

The strategy assumes that it is not always necessary or effective to rely on outside experts or imported innovations. The people most directly concerned with the school—the staff, students, parents, and citizens—have much of the knowledge and skill needed to create and implement many new programs. This is particularly true when the innovation concerns reorganizing the structure of the school and transforming the traditional ways that people work together. Organization Development assumes that it is possible to build a new awareness within the group so that the group itself can solve more of its own problems and more effectively implement the new programs it chooses.

Organization Development is a way of dealing with the processes of change rather than a prescription for particular contents of innovation. The demands placed on a school by persons inside and outside the organization vary from time to time, and from place to place, so no single innovation, procedure, or structure is best for all situations. There are many innovations that might be viewed by a given group as most desirable for their own use at that time. The organizational specialist brings to bear his knowledge and skills about human interaction and the processes of change to help a group identify their own circumstances, determine their own goals, and select the innovations that they want to implement. He does not impose his own diagnosis or solution, but helps the group increase its own interaction and problem-solving skills. By allowing groups to focus upon the change process, specialists in Organization Development help groups obtain

key social science understanding and increase commitment of the people involved in the change process.

Finally, Organization Development assumes that schools can become self-renewing. Although initial help to improve the organization usually comes from an outside specialist, the long-range goal is to transmit the necessary knowledge and skill to members of the group or organization itself. A group which has internalized this knowledge and these skills and is capable of providing consultation for itself is said to be truly self-renewing.

# development enables the school

To monitor and respond to the environment
To find, maintain, and use the resources and ideas needed to respond

# by improving it's self-renewing capabilities

Communication processes
Problem-solving processes
Decision-making procedures
Meeting procedures
Potential for collaboration

# becomes self-renewing by experiencing

Learning-by-doing in the task group
Skill training
New procedures
Survey feedback
Group and intergroup exercises

# a self-renewing school monitors and responds to its complex environments

People in a self-renewing school recognize that the demands from the groups, organizations and individuals in the school's social environment will always be multiple and changing, yet they remain confident of their ability to respond creatively. The importance of this confidence is surely clear to all of us who have worked in schools during the last decade. Remember when our professional colleagues, as well as parents and the general public, urged us to "up-grade" our subject-matter content? We were told to make our teaching academically challenging—to put some intellectual vigor into what we were doing. We responded (although perhaps too slowly) with new maths, new sciences, and new foreign language programs. It was not long—in fact, it was before most of these programs were fully implemented,—that the critics started urging us to pay more attention to the emotional needs of our students.

Schools face both conflicting and changing demands. How many of us have been faced with these conflicting demands?

A school board wants busing.

Some parents want dress codes to reflect their values.

A state department wants a Career Education Curriculum.

Some educators want better facilities and more supplies.

Some students want relevance.

Some parents want neighborhood schools.

Some students want autonomy.

Some teachers want more attention to the liberal arts.

Some citizens want lower taxes.

Some parents want more of the "basics."

The most important point to remember is that schools exist in environments characterized by conflicting forces that are always shifting and changing. Schools must constantly monitor these ebbs and flows and respond, not slavishly, but with adaptive change. A school that can do this successfully is self-renewing.

# a self-renewing school uses its human resources effectively

People in a self-renewing school know their own resources and also have the ability to seek out new resources to create new possibilities for themselves and their students.

How often have we blamed our inability to bring about needed change on lack of resources? Granted, resources are indeed often scarce; money for personnel is limited; space for learning settings is cramped. Time always seems to be scarce, whether we try to find enough of it to reach our goals within classrooms or to join in meetings so we can collaborate with others. Often the problem is not simply the quantity of resources available, but how the presently or potentially available resources are used. A self-renewing school identifies the need for additional resources and can tap the variety of resources, particularly the unused human potential, that already exists.

The following might be observed from time to time in a self-renewing school.

- The staff designs ways to help each other keep up-to-date.
- The faculty spends time "brainstorming" about what could happen three years from now.
- A parent volunteer conducts a lively children's theater program.
- The staff reorganizes to create a kindergarten team.
- Several junior high students assist daily by tutoring elementary pupils who need help in reading.
- A teacher asks another to come into his classroom and coach him in more effective methods of leading discussions.

The people in a self-renewing school delight in dreaming up new ways of organizing themselves so they can use all their potential resources to meet demands of some current problem. They think about the future and plan ways to be prepared to meet expected problems.

# organization development helps the school improve its self-renewing capabilities. communication processes

For people in schools to identify goals, solve problems, make decisions, or put plans into action, many acts of communication are required. Particularly if complex plans are to be developed—plans requiring many people to coordinate their actions—then understanding is extremely important. If the school is to remain responsive to demands of all sorts, an open flow of information both from and to the various groups concerned must be maintained.

A school that is self-renewing has open channels of communication within the school as well as between the school and other groups. Members have interpersonal skills that facilitate clear, open and honest communication. They have procedures for helping those outside the school understand "what the school stands for" and for really listening to what those outside are saying.

Which of the following qualities of communication apply to your school or work group at the present time?

| DO YOU OBSERVE . . . | OR DO YOU OBSERVE . . . |
| --- | --- |
| Persons continually trying to make their position known and persuading others of its merits—talking past each other and unwilling to hear what others say? | Persons continually checking to make sure they understand what others are saying—speaking to relevant issues? |
| Unpleasant feelings remaining hidden? | Persons feeling free to report directly to others if something in the interpersonal communication process is bothering them? |
| Feelings of others being ignored—little checking to find out what they are? | Persons showing concern for the feelings of others—monitoring non-verbal cues and checking the accuracy of impressions? |
| Voices easily becoming loud and emphatic regardless of the issue? | Voices remaining calm unless the issue is sensitive or very controversial? |
| Seeing outsiders and their views as a threat? | Continually listening to views of others on the outside of the group? |
| Taking an attitude of "If we know what's going on, that's all that's important," toward other groups? | Continually sending of information to other groups so as to increase understanding? |
| A lot of talk about trivial issues with little attention to important issues? | Important and fundamental issues and differences are common topics of conversation? |
| **THESE ARE COMMUNICATION PATTERNS COMMONLY OBSERVED IN NON-SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.** | **THESE ARE COMMUNICATION PATTERNS OBSERVED IN SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.** |

# organization development helps the school improve its self-renewing capabilities. problem-solving processes

Problems come to us who work in schools in many forms. Some are complex, requiring extensive study and inquiry; others are simple and can be analyzed quickly. Essentially, whether large or small, problems are intellectual itches or emotional pinches: Some problems, like budget cuts, present themselves with a bang. Others consist initially of unsettled ideas or uneasy feelings we have that the way things are is not quite the way we would like them to be. Any or all of these may cause discomfort. Rarely, however, do schools make a conscious use of a planned problem-solving procedure.

Self-renewing schools have effective problem-solving procedures. Members within the school are willing and able to identify clearly the problems confronting them. Likewise, they can develop workable plans for solving the problems in collaborative ways.[2]

Which of the following problem-solving procedures characterize your school or work group?

**DO YOU OBSERVE . . .**

Persons ignoring problems or stating them in a form which ignores the real issues?

Few groups forming to work on problems?

No systematic problem-solving procedure followed?

Members afraid to express ideas, goals, and proposals because they will be sharply criticized before consideration?

An attitude that problems are a sign of illness—life would be better if there were no problems?

**THESE ARE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCEDURES COMMONLY OBSERVED IN NON-SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.**

**OR DO YOU OBSERVE . . .**

Persons stating the problems precisely and directly, regardless of the discomfort it causes?

People organizing quickly into groups to engage in joint inquiry regarding problems?

Procedures exist which members commonly understand and have the ability to follow?

Members eager to share goals, ideas and proposals—knowing the contributions will be evaluated critically but respectfully?

An attitude that views problems as normal—solving problems is welcomed as a chance to unleash creativity for improvement?

**THESE ARE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCEDURES OBSERVED IN SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.**

# organization development helps the school improve its self-renewing capabilities. decision-making procedures

Most efforts to solve problems include the generation of proposals or plans for action. Because human beings have different goals, see the current situation in different ways, or because judgments differ as to the effectiveness of one plan over another, decisions must be made between alternatives. Decision-making—choosing among alternatives—occurs regularly in schools. A list of examples might look something like this:

- Should average class size be 20, 25, or 30?
- Should we use textbook A or textbook B?
- Should teacher X be retained or dismissed?
- Should students be required to wear shoes or sandals?
- Should each period be 45 or 55 minutes long?
- Should social science be integrated with science?

Needless to say, the list is endless. The point is that decisions must be and are made in schools; and although this process is often the painful, conflict-producing side of a school's organizational life, it can also be exciting and a challenge.

Which of the following decision-making processes apply to your school or group?

| DO YOU OBSERVE . . . | OR DO YOU OBSERVE . . . |
| --- | --- |
| Decisions being made only by those who possess authority? | Decisions being made by those who have information—emphasis placed on the best decision, not who makes the decision? |
| Decision-making responsibilities unclear —no sharing of understandings? | Decision-making responsibilities identified ahead of time and members sharing this understanding? |
| Decisions being made that affect people's lives without a chance for their involvement? | Those who are affected by a decision help make the decision? |
| Members often arguing for involvement, but becoming frustrated when many meetings are spent trying to reach a decision? | Members recognizing that if they want to be involved in decision-making, it will take time? |
| Members not aware of various decision-making options nor able to state advantages and disadvantages of each? | Members recognizing that there are several ways to make decisions (one-man, majority vote, consensual) and identifying which one best serves a particular purpose? |
| Decisions that require understanding and commitment being made by one man or by majority vote? | Decisions that require total understanding and commitment being made consensually? |
| **THESE ARE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES COMMONLY OBSERVED IN NON-SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.** | **THESE ARE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES OBSERVED IN SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.** |

# organization development helps the school improve its self-renewing capabilities. meeting procedures

Certainly we who work in schools—like those in other organizations, for that matter—spend a considerable portion of our time in meetings. Rarely, however, do we find anyone who will speak favorably of this aspect of our work. Instead, people speak of meetings as a burden that must be endured. This is unfortunate, because meetings are where problem-solving and decision-making occur. They can be the stage where the human drama of schools is carried out. They can be satisfying, exciting, and rewarding events in the life of the organization.

Which of the following characteristics best describes the way most of your meetings go?

**DO YOU OBSERVE . . .**

Meetings starting late, members straggling in?

Group agreements existing only implicitly, often misunderstood, and considered openly only rarely?

Members competing and acting cold toward one another?

Only a few members talking, others apathetic?

Group failing to discover members who have special resources?

Methods and procedural rules that are inflexible or generally consist of strict adherence to *Robert's Rules of Order*?

Members interrupting each other, talking at the same time, using sarcasm, ridicule or "put-downs" to express disapproval?

**THESE ARE CHARACTERISTICS OF MEETINGS IN NON-SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.**

**OR DO YOU OBSERVE . . .**

Meetings starting promptly, members present and eager to begin?

Group agreements about meeting procedures made explicit in advance?

Members cooperating and acting warm toward one another?

All members involved and getting a chance to talk?

Members with special resources being identified and listened to carefully?

Methods and procedural rules that are flexible and can be readily adapted for different needs?

Communication that is open and direct, with favorable and unfavorable feelings being described explicitly?

**THESE ARE CHARACTERISTICS OF MEETINGS IN SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.**

# organization development helps the school improve its self-renewing capabilities. working together

There is ample evidence to suggest that people who work together can produce a superior result. People who work together can help each other find out about novel solutions and new developments. Furthermore, people who work together can provide each other with the support which makes innovation less risky.

However, most of us who work in schools do so by ourselves. Organizational patterns in most schools today were not designed to promote collaboration. They were designed in an era when the objective was to teach identical curricula to large numbers of students in an "efficient" manner. Teachers were stationed in self-contained classrooms with inflexible schedules and a fixed pupil-teacher ratio. Today the goals, methods and curricula are multifaceted and flexible. An organizational pattern that keeps people alone now places unreasonable physical and psychological burdens on people.

In summary, the model of the omnicapable teacher working alone is obsolete. People in schools are interdependent and must work together. If sometimes we act as if we prefer not to be interdependent, it is because our organizational structures and processes have made interdependence difficult—even punishing. In a self-renewing school, structures and processes increase communication of new ideas, encourage mutual support, and strengthen the satisfaction that comes from close personal contact while working together toward common and important ends.

Which of the following examples of working arrangements are most common in your school or group?

**DO YOU OBSERVE . . .**

Teachers working by themselves in isolated classrooms?

In classrooms, students working mainly independently—grading procedures emphasizing competition?

Students all facing the teacher in straight rows?

In classrooms and staff rooms, people maintaining "distance" from one another or trying to impress one another?

People making comments to "one-up" others?—assuming win-lose relationships?

Bulletin boards posted only by adults, with notices coming mainly from the principal or central office?

Teachers not feeling comfortable with other adults in the classroom?

In formal discussions centering on gripes or anecdotes about frustrating students?

**THESE ARE NON-COLLABORATIVE BEHAVIORS COMMONLY OBSERVED IN NON-SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.**

**OR DO YOU OBSERVE . . .**

Teachers flexibly arranged in pairs or teams in classrooms?

In classrooms, groups of students working together on common projects and helping one another—grading procedures encouraging cooperation and support?

Students in classrooms sitting face-to-face in small groups so that they can talk to one another?

In classrooms and staff rooms people touching and talking to one another—expressing feelings of comradeship?

People making comments expressing the desire to help one another?—assuming win-win relationships?

In hallways and on bulletin boards, student work displayed and notices of school and class activities posted?

Teachers inviting other teachers to observe them or join them in teaching?

Educational ideas being discussed in formal and informal gatherings?

**THESE ARE COLLABORATIVE BEHAVIORS OBSERVED IN SELF-RENEWING SCHOOLS.**

# people make the school self-renewing by experiencing learning-by-doing in the task group

Organization Development training can help a school become self-renewing.

The specific activities that make up a typical Organization Development learning sequence make primary use of "experiential learning." The "learning by doing rather than listening to a lecture" approach is intended to help the individual or group translate what is learned into the "real-life" work situation.

Just because Organization Development training makes use of experiential learning in the group setting, some people sometimes confuse it with sensitivity training. But sensitivity training usually brings together people who do not know one another to focus on individual learning and to help each person become more aware of himself and the way others see him. In contrast, Organization Development works chiefly with intact task groups, and the major focus is upon group effectiveness. Organization Development training deals specifically with increasing the effectiveness of group members' job-related interaction and their satisfaction in it. Skills in effective interpersonal communication, decision-making, problem-solving, managing conflict, and in giving or receiving constructive feedback provide participants with tools that will enhance their ability to work more effectively toward achieving group objectives.

## skill training

Skill training for all individuals is an integral part of an Organization Development intervention. Participants are given opportunities to learn and practice various skills in interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and decision-making in an open environment. This "safe" atmosphere increases the ease of trying out new behaviors and of risking new ideas and feelings. While some of the skills are introduced through lecturettes and readings, the important learning comes when the group practices the skills in exercises or simulations and while it works on its own issues and problems. As group members become more skillful and competent

in group processes and interpersonal skills, group trust develops. As the group learns that its members are competent and motivated to help the group, it becomes easier to make contributions that are helpful rather than unhelpful or harmful to the group's process.

## new procedures

Participants are also taught several new procedures that lead to increased group effectiveness. Procedures differ from exercises and simulations, which are like "learning games" that illuminate some aspect of the group's process. Procedures are techniques or methods of operating that a group can use repeatedly in its daily work. For example, a particular goal identification procedure may help the group more effectively define its problems. The use of the "fish-bowl" procedure may increase meeting effectiveness by involving more group members in discussions and decisions. A structured activity may help group members uncover conflict so that it can be managed in constructive ways.

## data survey feedback

An important technique used in an Organization Development intervention is called data survey feedback. The group learns to generate important and valid data about itself by asking each person (*survey*) to share his or her impressions (*data*) about the way the group works. All this information is collected and combined into a single picture of what the group is thinking and feeling. The picture is reported (*feedback*) to the group and publicly considered to serve as a springboard for planning and action. This technique is useful when the group is setting goals, solving problems, making decisions, implementing proposals, or assessing movement toward stated goals.

## group and inter-group exercises

Exercises may illuminate processes either within or between groups. Through some exercises or simulations, group members interact with one another while focusing on a specific aspect of the way they work together. In these "learning games," participants look at communication, problem-solving, and decision-making processes without the pressures that build up in their real jobs. A group might work together solving a puzzle, then discuss learnings about cooperation, and finally look for ways of being more cooperative in planning a new program.

# organization development can become a permanent part of a self-renewing school district

If schools are to cope with their ever-changing environment, they must attend in some systematic way to their self-renewing capabilities. Organization Development training is therefore needed on a continuous basis. One way a school or district can satisfy this need is to employ specialists from one of the several groups listed at the end of this booklet—groups that specialize in Organization Development in schools. The usual sequence is to make contact with the outside specialists, explore concerns, and make a contract. The specialists then collect diagnostic data about the organization and plan the intervention srategy. Several training events and various follow-up activities are conducted. Eventually, the specialists conclude their work and leave.

Evidence suggests that the impact of this kind of consultation is useful but fades rather quickly. Since it is financially and logistically impractical to have outside specialists indefinitely, alternative methods are needed to stabilize the new modes of organizational functioning.

One alternative that appears to work well has been developed by Richard Schmuck, Philip Runkel, and their colleagues at the Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration at the University of Oregon in Eugene. It consists of training school personnel as

specialists in Organization Development.

After being trained by outside consultants, the teachers, administrators, and supporting staff personnel in the cadre of specialists are able to make OD training continuously available to a school district, and to mobilize their resources quickly to respond to requests for assistance from school staffs and other groups. Two important advantages of this approach have been discovered in the cadres that have already been established in Kent and Vancouver, Washington and in Eugene, Oregon. First, because the specialists are already members of the school district, they usually inspire greater trust and confidence among groups seeking training than do "outsiders." Second, because the cadre's members come from all parts and levels of the district, no specialist is called upon to be both a trainer and a colleague of those with whom he works daily; the cadre is thus able to avoid obstacles that often confront "insiders." In short, the district gains the benefits of skilled consultants while avoiding the costs and pitfalls incurred in dealing with an outside agency. The key features of the cadres of organization specialists are:

**Teams and Subsystems:** Organization specialists are organized into training teams which work and learn together. When a request for consultation is received, the team members have sufficient trust and confidence in each other to work well together.

The entire cadre is also a subsystem of the district; that is, it is viewed as a group carrying out legitimate and important activities. It is identifiable as a group, has a supporting budget, and is known by others in the district to have administrative support. In a district with a staff of 600, it has been found that a cadre of specialists can operate well if it is financially supported on an annual basis by one-half the coordinator's salary, one-tenth to one-fifth of most other specialists' salaries and a few thousand dollars per year for releasing occasional hours of the personnel with whom the specialists are working.

**Part-time Assignment:** This feature brings the specialists the advantage of being both insiders and outsiders. The fact that during most of the week the specialists are teachers, counselors, principals, or central office personnel means that they are already accepted and paid members of the school district. There is little need to worry that the specialists may use the district for their own purposes and never be seen again. Further, the part-time specialists will not be likely

to carry out their duties as organizational specialists at the expense of other teachers or principals because they are colleagues. And while part-time specialists gain these advantages of the insider, they can also acquire vital advantages of the outsider. Their perspective on the situation of their clients is relatively unbiased, because they are in fact outsiders to the clients' school. Also, clients tend to regard specialists from outside their own staff as having an expertise and competence that warrants much the same confidence as that usually accorded to the consultant who receives a fee.

The part-time assignment of specialists gives the whole scheme certain advantages beyond even those of the insider and outsider. One is the fact that each specialist becomes a channel of communication between his or her own segment of the district and the team of specialists as a whole. Secondly, each specialist becomes a source of support and expertise when other cadre members are working with the group of which the specialist is regularly a part.

**Client Groups:** Various kinds of intact work groups can utilize the specialists. A school staff as a whole might request OD training because of a general desire to improve its self-renewing capabilities or because it wants assistance in making a major curricular or organizational change.

It is not necessary to involve the total school staff. Occasionally a subgroup such as a team or department wishes to become involved in Organization Development training to work on its own problems without involving others.

Some client groups are not schools or parts of schools, but subgroups within the district composed of people from a number of schools, such as a group of counselors who work in different schools or a group of central office administrators who work with all schools.

Parents can also become participants in OD interventions when they and the staff want to work jointly on mutual problems. Groups of students, in student councils and classrooms, can also become clients for the specialists. When groups of students are organized for learning or planning joint activities, they can be helped in the same way as other intact work groups.

**Readiness:** Specialists in Organization Development inside the district do not force themselves on client groups. They wait for the school or group to take the initiative to ask for assistance before they offer their services. Even when called on, the specialists can make flexible arrange-

ments if the group is at first unsure of how deeply it wants to commit itself by working out sequential, tentative stages of mutual commitment to the project.

**Process, Not Content:** Organization Development specialists do not give advice about the content of problems. They do not pose as experts in curriculum, finance, teaching methods, or whatever, because their strategy assumes that people are the best judges of their own problems, goals and solutions. Instead, they are experts who offer a greater range of group and organizational processes than school people ordinarily use as help to members of the district in working on their own important problems. The specialists offer methods; they do not offer the answers or solutions to problems. As long as the specialists restrict themselves to offering process and method, clients need never feel that their own expertise is being taken out of their hands.

**Self-Renewal:** In order to maintain their effectiveness over the years, the specialists establish selection and training procedures to replenish their ranks when necessary, they periodically assess their own group dynamics, they seek additional training to improve their own skills, and they keep in contact with skilled consultants in outside agencies whom they can call for special help.

In summary, it is the goal of improving the self-renewing capabilities of intact work groups that guides the efforts of inside specialists in Organization Development once they are established in a school district. As they work with various school groups, their success is measured in their ability to open up clients' communication, increase collaboration, and improve problem solving in ways that make work more productive and satisfying.

# organization development can make a difference

The theory and technology of Organization Development has been tested in numerous studies. Though there is not space in this booklet to describe in detail the uses of Organization Development for school improvement, what follows is a summary of some major findings. Information about the publications appears at the end of the booklet.
Findings from a few studies have shown that Organization Development . . .

**Changes the perceptions** of the principal held by the faculty. As a result of Organization Development, the principal makes better decisions, produces more effective solutions to problems, and this is viewed as more helpful by the staff. This result has been described in the book by Schmuck and Runkel (*Organizational Training for a School Faculty*).

**Improves staff meetings.** This also is described in the book by Schmuck and Runkel mentioned above.

**Increases the number** of useful innovations attempted within a school. For evidence of this, consult the book by Schmuck and Runkel and also the dissertation by Saturen.

**Helps faculties** become more open in communications, more helpful toward one another, and more willing to take risks. See the book by Schmuck and Runkel and the chapter by Fosmire, Keutzer, and Diller in the book by Schmuck and Miles.

**Changes the climate** in the classroom. Teachers adopt communicative styles that bring more initiative from students. This finding was reported in the chapter by Bigelow in the book by Schmuck and Miles.

**Produces a climate** of openness and responsibility in which students join. Student attitudes toward school improve during the school year rather than degenerate. The chapter by Fosmire, Keutzer, and Diller in the Schmuck and Miles book explains this further.

**Changes the instructional patterns** that teachers design and implement. Arends and Essig elaborate on this in their report.

**Makes the school more attractive** to the teachers. Consult the dissertation by Saturen for discussion of his finding.

# a training sequence in organization development

A question often asked of specialists by educators considering Organization Development training is, "How much time will we have to commit and what exactly will we do during a training workshop?" Included in this section is a description of the typical stages of an intervention and a sample "lesson plan", illustrating activities and time-periods typical of an Organization Development workshop.

We include these illustrations with some reluctance. We want it to be plain that **NO TWO TRAINING EVENTS WILL BE THE SAME.** Preliminary diagnosis helps the specialists plan events to meet the specific needs of each group they work with. Keeping this fact in mind, the stages and the examples that follow may help you imagine what you might undergo should your group decide to become involved in Organization Development training.

Most Organization Development workshops are planned and organized around four stages.

**Stage 1: Improving Interpersonal Openness.** Specialists attempt to build increased openness and ease of interpersonal communication among the members of the group they are working with by training them in such communication skills as paraphrasing, describing behavior, describing their own feelings, checking their perceptions of others' feelings and giving and receiving feedback. This stage develops constructive openness, increasing confidence among the staff in the fact that communication with colleagues can be rewarding and, indeed, is vital.

**Stage 2: Recognizing and Increasing Interdependence.** Specialists attempt to build increased interdependence among educators who are working together toward achieving common goals. Specialists can get participants to explore the phenomenon of interdependence, to recognize their need for collaboration, and to identify ways that working together can be helpful and satisfying.

**Stage 3: Changing Shared Expectations.** Specialists attempt to get participants to build new expectations—those that support helpfulness among the staff—and expectations which encourage the surfacing of intergroup conflicts. Specialists can invite the educators to state some frustrations that they are encountering in their jobs and to practice a sequence of problem-solving steps to reduce these frustrations. Systematic problem-solving not only reduces frustrations, but also yields the satisfaction of knowing that others value the contribution one has made to the solution.

**Stage 4: Changing Roles, Procedures, Structures.** The specialists help client groups build new functions, roles, procedures, and structures which become formal and basic in the total fabric of the school. Once this stage is completed, the school is said to be self-renewing and can perform many of the services of the consultant for itself.

# a sample OD training sequence

**A THREE DAY PRE-SCHOOL WORKSHOP**

**FIRST DAY**

WARM-UP: WHO-AM-I- EXERCISE

This is an ice-breaker activity. Participants write five things about themselves on a card, then nonverbally walk around the room and read the cards of others.

ORIENTATION AND GOALS OF WORKSHOP:

The consultant feeds back the data from the pre-workshop interviews and the group discusses them.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION EXERCISE:

Small groups of participants engage in a series of activities to learn and practice paraphrasing, perception checking, behavior description, and description of own feelings.

LECTURETTE ON HANDLING MISCOMMUNICATION

LUNCH BREAK

FIVE SQUARE EXERCISE

This activity allows participants to practice the interpersonal communication skills while exploring behaviors that are helpful and unhelpful in group problem solving.

FISHBOWL PROCEDURE:

This procedure helps participants have a good discussion in a large group. The focus of the discussion is on debriefing the day's activities.

GROUP EXPECTATIONS SURVEY

This survey, intended to uncover inaccurate perceptions within the group, is administered so that the data can be fed back to the group the next day.

**SECOND DAY**

WARM-UP

This activity gives participants an opportunity to practice helping and being helped by another person.

DATA FEEDBACK FROM GROUP EXPECTATIONS SURVEY

The data are presented as a graph or chart and the participants discuss their implications and meanings.

LECTURETTE ON CONSTRUCTIVE OPENNESS AND GROUP TRUST IMAGING EXERCISE

This activity uncovers conflict between subsystems within the school. Participants identify helpful and unhelpful behaviors they see on the part of other groups, give feedback to the other groups and receive feedback from them. All groups then generate a series of organizational concerns to be used later in problem solving.

LUNCH BREAK

IMAGING EXERCISE CONTINUES

LECTURETTE ON UNCOVERING AND MANAGING CONFLICT FOR PRODUCTIVE ENDS

GENERATING ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS

Participants identify several organizational concerns that have emerged from prior activities. In small groups these concerns are formed into problem statements and decisions are made as to which problems should be explored in the problem-solving exercise to follow.

DEBRIEFED

In a fishbowl, participants and trainers assess how things are going.

HOMEWORK

Participants read two handouts on "Group Problem Solving: and go through a self-correcting exercise.

**THIRD DAY**

INTRODUCTION TO PROBLEM SOLVING

Participants are introduced to a group problem-solving procedure which emphasizes identification of three aspects of problems.

—What is the situation?
—What are the goals and targets?
—What can be done to reduce the discrepancy between the situation and the target?

The model is explained and discussed. Small groups of participants each choose a problem for analysis and inquiry from those previously identified.

PROBLEM SOLVING IN SUBGROUPS

Participants continue to practice the problem-solving procedures while working on one of their "real life" organizational problems.

LUNCH BREAK

PROBLEM SOLVING CONTINUES

SHARING RESULTS OF PROBLEM SOLVING

Each subgroup shares its efforts with the total group. Decisions may be made about some of the proposals generated or plans for further action are initiated.

FINAL EXERCISE FOR BUILDING TRUST AND GENERATING RESOURCES

Participants write lists of things they do well on large sheets of newsprint. These are then posted and everyone adds items to others' lists. Each sheet of newsprint can be taken home by its owner, or—if the group wishes—the lists can be compiled and redistributed to participants at a later time.

## interim consultation

During the next two months, the trainers serve as process consultants in the meetings of various teams and the staff. Participants explore further how their pool of resources can be used, carry further the problem solving started at the initial workshop, and the trainers provide additional input on interpersonal communication and on group and organizational processes. Diagnostic data are collected to facilitate planning of the follow-up workshop.

## follow-up workshop

WARM-UP AND ORIENTATION TOWARD THE GOALS OF THE DAY

LECTURETTE ON LEADERSHIP PATTERNS IN DECISION MAKING

CONSENSUS EXERCISE

In small groups, participants undergo an exercise in decision by consensus.

LECTURETTE ON VARIOUS TYPES OF DECISION MAKING

EXERCISE USING THE DECISION MATRIX

Participants share their views about decision making, telling which methods would work best for them under various conditions.

LUNCH BREAK

EXERCISE ON SKILLS FOR MEETINGS

Participants learn several procedures and skills that lead to satisfying and efficient meetings as they carry on one of their regular meetings. These skills and procedures include:

- —convening a meeting
- —making group agreements explicit
- —setting an agenda
- —using a survey
- —giving and receiving feedback during meetings
- —gatekeeping and looking at process

DEBRIEF AND PLAN FOR FURTHER WORK

# individuals and programs concerned with organization development in schools

A program of research and development on Organization Development in schools began in 1967 at the Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration at the University of Oregon. In the first five years of the program, Richard A. Schmuck, Philip J. Runkel, and their colleagues worked with the staff of a junior high, the entire professional staff of a school district, the staff and students of a senior high, and the staffs of Multi-unit elementary schools. In Kent, Washington and Eugene, Oregon, they created cadres of specialists within the school districts. The publications and research resulting from their work is reported in the bibliography.

Others are actively involved in developing OD theory and strategies for schools. Notable among these are Fred Fosmire at the University of Oregon, the Program in Humanistic Education at the State University of New York at Albany, and the Program for Preparing Educational Training Consultants from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon. More detailed information about these and other individuals and programs appears in an appendix to a book by Richard A. Schmuck and Matthew B. Miles, *Organization Development in Schools* (1971), or could be obtained by writing to The Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration or the cadres of OD specialists in the Eugene, Oregon, or Kent, Washington, school districts.

# handbook of organization development in schools

As a result of CASEA's experience with OD training in a number of other school districts in the Pacific Northwest, a handbook has been written by Richard. Schmuck, Philip Runkel, Steven Saturen, Ronald Martell, and C. Brooklyn Derr. It incorporates many of the ideas and activities that have proved useful in helping organizational specialists carry out organization development.

This guide is called *Handbook of Organization Development in Schools*. It contains readings, references, and action guides for consultants, administrators, and organizational specialists who wish to aid school organizations to change their structure or mode of operation. It was published in 1972 by National Press Books, 850 Hansen Way, Palo Alto, California 94304.

The *Handbook's* chapter headings are:

1. Organizational Theory
2. Organizational Training
3. Clarifying Communication
4. Establishing Goals
5. Uncovering and Working with Conflicts
6. Improving Meetings
7. Solving Problems
8. Making Decisions
9. Designing Training Interventions
10. Evaluation at Beginning, Middle, and End

Other relevant resources include:


Arends, Richard I. The Eugene Cadre of Organization Specialists: How to Build and Integrate a Team of OD Specialists into a School District. This paper should be completed in 1973; to obtain a copy, write to Richard I. Arends at CASEA, 1472 Kincaid, Eugene, Oregon 97401.

Arends, Richard I. and Don M. Essig. Organizational Development Training in the Unitized, Differentiated Staffing Elementary School. (Report No. 2 of the Differentiated Staffing Project in the Eugene, Oregon Public Schools, dated January 1972.) Issued by the Educational Research Information Center as Document ED 060-512;

Bigelow, Roland C. Changing Classroom Interaction Through Organization Development. This appears as a chapter in the book by Schmuck and Miles, *Organization Development in Schools*. It was published in 1971 by National Press Books, 850 Hansen Way, Palo Alto, California 94304.

Essig, Don M. and Richard I. Arends. Instructional Change in the Unitized, Differentiated Staffing Elementary School. (Report No. 5 of the Differentiated Staffing Project in the Eugene, Oregon Public Schools, dated January 1972.) Issued by the Educational Research Information Center as Document ED 060-515;

Fosmire, Fred, Carolin Keutzer, and Richard Diller. Starting Up a New Senior High School. This appears as a chapter in the book by Schmuck and Miles, *Organization Development in Schools*. Palo Alto, California: National Press Books, 1971.

Phelps, Jane and Richard I. Arends. Helping Parents and Educators to Solve School Problems Together: An Application of Organization Development. This report should be ready for publication by the summer of 1973; to obtain a copy, inquire of CASEA, 1472 Kincaid, Eugene, Oregon 97401.

Saturen, Steven. On the Way to Adaptability: Some Conditions for Organizational Self-Renewal in Elementary Schools. This is an unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Ore-

gon, Eugene, Oregon, 1972. Obtain a copy from University Microfilm Service, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Schmuck, Richard A. and Matthew Miles (Eds.). *Organization Development in Schools*. This book was published in 1971 by National Press Books, Palo Alto, California.

Schmuck, Richard A. and Philip J. Runkel. *Organizational Training for a School Faculty*. CASEA Monograph, 1970. Can be obtained from CASEA, 1472 Kincaid, Eugene, Oregon 97401. Price: $2.50. It is also condensed as a chapter entitled "Using Group Problem Solving Procedures" in the book edited by Schmuck and Miles.

Schmuck, Richard A., Philip J. Runkel, and Charles Blondino. Organizational Specialists in a School District. This was published in April, 1970 as Technical Report No. 11 by CASEA, 1472 Kincaid Street, Eugene, Oregon 97401. Price: $1.00.

Smith, Mary Ann. A Comparison of Two Elementary Schools Involved in a Major Change: or You Win a Few; You Lose a Few. This is an unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 1972. Obtain a copy from University Microfilm Service, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Wyant, Spencer. Organizational Development from the Inside: A Progress Report on the First Cadre of Organizational Specialists. This was published in April, 1972 as Technical Report No. 12 by CASEA, 1472 Kincaid, Eugene, Oregon 97401. Price: $1.00.

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